



Where's the Air?

Air isn't always the easiest thing to see, hear, touch, smell, or taste. Sometime we have to do a little detective work to even know it's there.

Can you **see** it?

Look outside at a flag, leaves on a tree or a lake or river. Describe what you see. How can you tell there is air by using your eyes?

Can you **smell** it?

Close your mouth and take a deep breath through your nose. Describe what you smell. You may smell something, you may not. Air itself does not have an obvious smell; **air hitchhikers** may however. Keep in mind if you can smell something, you are also breathing it in to your body.

Can you **feel** it?

Open your palm and move your hand back and forth near your face. Describe what you feel.

Can you **taste** it?

Hold your tongue out and try and taste the air around you. Describe what you taste. You may taste something, you may not. Air itself does not have an obvious taste; hitchhikers in the air may however.

Can you **hear** it?

Go outside (or stay inside), close your eyes and listen. Describe what you hear. How can you tell there is air by using your ears?

Questions:

1. By doing this experiment, what proof do you have that air is around you?
2. What words or phrases can you use to describe air?
3. What does the world need air for?
4. What would the world be like without air?



Now try writing a simple poem or riddle to describe air without using the word "air."
(See the example in the box) Read it to a parent or friend and see if they can figure out what it is you're describing. It's kind of like playing a guessing game with words.

Wisconsin Forest Animal

Its tail so soft and bushy
Its antlers so fierce and
such a beauty to see,

Its eyes so sharp,

Its legs so strong,

Its fur so soft,

Its hoofs so tough,

It runs so swift.

What is it?

Answer: a deer

Where's the Air? - Teacher's Supplement

Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate that air exists all around us.
- Describe physical characteristics of air.

Subjects:

- Science
- Language Arts

Materials:

- Where's the Air? student worksheet

Background Information:

- * Teachers, please remember to post or make available the bold-faced vocabulary word definitions.

Since you can not usually see air, it can be a difficult concept to understand, especially for children. The goal of this activity to provide evidence that air exists all around them. While doing the exercise, have students write down their observations and answer the questions on the worksheet. They will use this information to help write a poem or riddle that describes air to others. It might be helpful to go through a practice exercise with the students on how to write a riddle. Visit www.readwritethink.org for help and [instructions on how to write your own riddle](#).

We welcome your students' poems and riddles. We'll post some of the submittals on EEK!, Environmental Education for Kids, our kids web pages. Submit them to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, DNRAirEducation@wisconsin.gov, Wisconsin DNR, Air Education- AM/7, 101 S. Webster St., Madison, WI 53703.